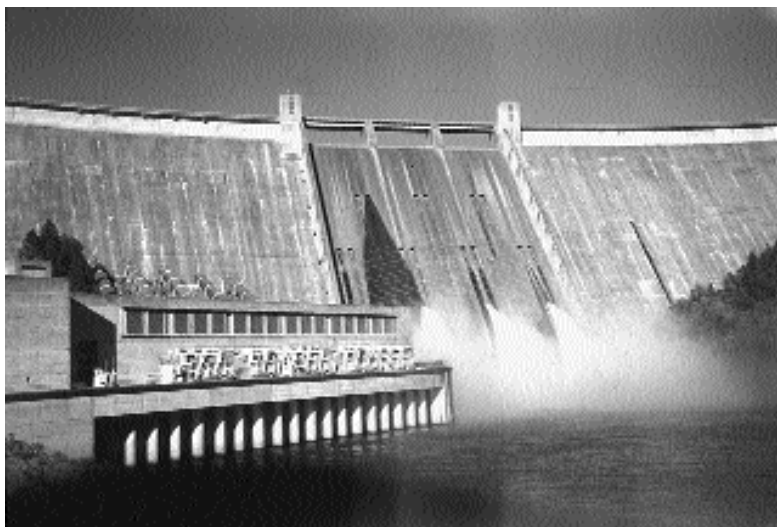


Robie S. Lange

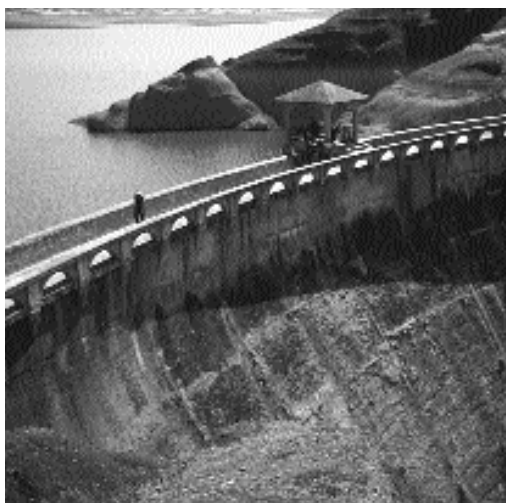
National Park Service to Study Large Federal Dams

Top right and below:
Shasta Dam, CA.



Photos by the author.

East Park Dam, CA.

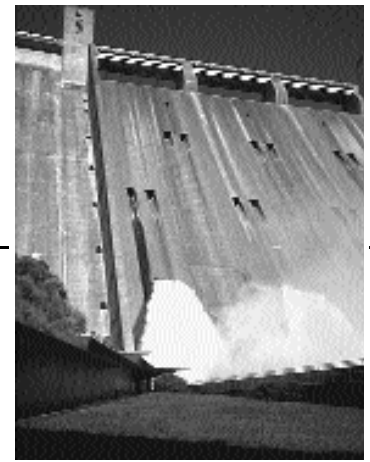


The National Park Service (NPS) has entered into a contract with the Public Works Historical Society (PWHS) to conduct a National Historic Landmarks (NHL) theme study of large federal dams. The historical interest of these massive structures rests not only with their representation as bold, massive, and sometimes innovative engineering accomplishments, but for

their broad impact on large parts of the nation; first through the sudden influx of federal dollars and armies of workers, and later through long-term impacts on navigation, flood control, irrigation, power generation, water supply, recreation, and the environment.

The NHL Survey undertakes this project as part of an Interagency Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). COE Senior Historian Martin Reuss and BOR Senior Historian Brit Storey proposed the project to NPS and secured the necessary funding. They have participated in

the project planning and will continue to actively review and comment on each phase of the project.



At the conclusion of this four-year effort, the project will yield two products. The first will be a comprehensive analytical study of the history of dam development in the United States. Each major type of dam construction (earthfill, concrete gravity, concrete arch, etc.) will be addressed. (Combination locks and dams will not be studied as part of this project.) In addition to evaluating the historical significance of various construction and engineering methods, this study will also address important aspects of social and environmental history related to these dams. The second product will be NHL nominations for those COE and BOR dams found to possess the required levels of national significance and historic integrity. While the Interagency Agreement funds the preparation of NHL nominations for only COE and BOR dams, the broader context provided by the historical study will be used by NPS to evaluate and nominate nationally significant dams constructed by other entities.

Howard Rosen, the Director of the PWHS, will coordinate the contractor's efforts. Martin Melosi, the Director of the Institute for Public History at the University of Houston, TX, and David Billington, Department of Civil Engineering, Princeton University, NJ, will serve as co-principal investigators and co-authors of the manuscript. Donald C. Jackson, Department of History, Lafayette College, PA, will conduct specific research tasks and support the rest of the project team. In coordination with the principal investigators, Alan Newell and his staff at Historical Research Associates, Inc., will prepare the NHL nominations and evaluation guidelines.

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